

## GOING TO THE CIRCUS

By CASPAR DEAN

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Aunt Sarah Bebee, after whose father Bebe's Corners had been named, was a widow past fifty the day a sporty looking man drove up to her farmhouse in a fancy rig and wanted to arrange with her to cover the front of her barn with circus pictures.

"Why, bless your heart, I never went to a circus in all my life!" she exclaimed in reply.

"But you are not too old to begin," he suggested. "Let me put the pictures up, and I'll leave you ten tickets of admission. You can go and take all your friends."

"Land o' massy, but you don't know Bebe's Corners! Everybody around here is a Methodist or Baptist or Presbyterian—everybody but me—and they won't even attend camp meeting if lemonade is to be sold on the grounds. I don't exactly know what my religion is, but if I went to a circus nobody would even speak to me again."

The circus man wanted his bills on that barn, and he argued and reasoned for half an hour. He saw that Aunt Sarah was an independent character and that if he could get her started she'd be ready to defy public opinion. The result was that she finally said:

"Well, go ahead with your pictures. I never saw an elephant or lion or tiger in my life, and I'll go and see the manager part anyhow. There'll be an awful row around here, and folks will think that Satan has got hold of me, but I'll have to stand it."

The pictures were hardly up when Deacon Danforth happened along the highway and saw them. He turned pale and trembled. Not in twenty years before had a barn on the Red Mill road been thus defiled. When he had recovered a little from the shock, he walked to the house and confronted the widow. For the first fifteen minutes the conversation was devoted to Satan, hades, Lot's wife, Judas Iscariot and other interesting subjects. But it gradually tapered off to hyenas, bon constrictors and alligators, and the deacon was almost smiling when he left the house.

Next day Deacon Bidwell saw those pictures as he sat in his buggy behind his old white horse. The horse saw them before he did and stopped so suddenly that the deacon was pitched against the dashboard. For a long minute the good old man thought his eyes deceived him, but the true state of affairs finally dawned upon him, and he groaned and sighed and drove up to the widow's gate.

"Widder Bebee, have you sold your livin' soul to Satan?" was his greeting, and then the fur flew. It was nearly an hour before he left the house, but he wasn't sighing and groaning as he went. On the contrary, he looked rather cheerful, and he called back from the gate:

"Yes, I suppose there'll be enemies there with two bumps, maybe with three, and they'll be with lookin' at."

There was one more deacon in the neighborhood, Deacon Burton. He was driving to town to get a pitchfork mended and was humming the air of "I Want to Be an Angel" when the colored postboys suddenly confronted him. They were short skirted, long legged damsels poised on barebacked horses or jumping through paper covered hoops. He stood and gazed and felt cold chills go up his back. He drove on to the farmhouse, half expecting to find the Widow Bebee trying to turn handsprings over a kitchen chair.

"I wouldn't 'a' believed it, widder—I wouldn't 'a' believed it!" he began as he entered the house. "It's the awfulest thing I ever heard of, and you know I've bin in Chicago twice and seen some awful things."

The widow had a reply ready. It began with hyenas and worked up to elephants, taking in lions, tigers, grizzly bears and sea lions as it rose upward. She talked so earnestly and well that when Deacon Burton was ready to go he reluctantly admitted:

"No, I don't 'spose it's any more harm to look at a lion than to look at a woodchuck if you don't git mad and rip and swear over it."

There were others besides the deacons. There was old Mrs. Gaynor, for instance. She wasn't exactly a zealot, but she never took a dozen eggs to market without asking Heaven to bless them and make the price 14 cents a dozen. She wasn't a bigot, but she contended that her own brand of religion was the only one to be saved by. She wasn't narrow minded, but when she heard of those circus posters she went down to see Aunt Sarah and to say:

"I've just stepped in a minit to say that if you go to that circus I can't never let you enter my doors ag'in."

Aunt Sarah started in to argue, but old Mrs. Gaynor was on her guard against the wiles of Satan and wouldn't wait for further talk.

The day of the circus arrived, and the widow drove into Medina to attend it. For some reason not to be explained a dozen farmers around her had business in town that day and made an early start—some of them before daylight. Some of them also lingered and drove home after dark.

It was all over the neighborhood that Aunt Sarah defied public opinion, and it was old Mrs. Gaynor who determined to bring her to book. She went about it in malevolence. She got up what she called a quilling bee and asked the three deacons and their wives and three or four others, and at a proper hour Aunt Sarah was sent for to be crushed. She arrived, and when

asked if she had anything to say she very calmly replied:

"I didn't intend to see nuthin' but the animals, but when I got in there Satan beckoned me into the circus tent, and I went. The jokes of the clown tickled me almost to death. That's all I've got to say."

"Deacon Danforth, what do you think of such conduct?" asked Mrs. Gaynor as she folded her arms and rolled up her eyes.

"Nuthin', 'cept that I sat jest behind Aunt Sarah and was tickled, too!" he replied.

"And you, Deacon Bidwell?"

"Wa'al, the horses was wonderfully trained—wonderfully. I can't skarnely make out how they do it."

"And you, Deacon Burton? You ain't goin' to tell me you was there too?"

"I got kind of tired lookin' at the two hump camels, and as one ticket admitted to all I went into the circus part," admitted the deacon.

"And where did you all git tickets?" demanded the accuser as a sudden thought flashed across her mind.

"Aunt Sarah gave us deadheads!" answered the three deacons in chorus.

"And left me out, when she knew I was jest dyin' to see the whole thing! Well, now, you can all go home without any supper, and if I ever speak to one of you ag'in I hope to fall dead on my own doorstep!"

**HIGHER EDUCATION.**

Those who plead the cause of Latin and Greek in our higher education should remember that colleges were first founded in the early middle ages to teach the classics to prospective priests, for use in reading rituals.

Greek in the east and Latin in the west, at a time when these languages were obsolescent in speech and yet contained all the literature, philosophy, poetry and such science as the world of Europe knew, and the modern tongues, just coming into use in Europe, north and south, had in them neither literature nor other elements of learning.

College so begun became the fashion. Every college man was a classical man, and naturally then, as now, a man would feel that his own college culture was the right one.

It soon became a common saying that the only education worthy of the name was Greek and Latin. But now modern languages are very rich in every form of literature and learning, everything from the classics has been often emptied into them by better masters than the average student can fairly hope to be, losing some and also gaining some in the translation from languages which few scholars even learn to read and to enjoy, while a wealth of scientific knowledge of the boundless world, which to know is the real learning, has sprung up in many modern tongues.

—Worcester Gazette.

**SURPRISING THE DOCTOR.**

Scottish shrewdness is occasionally overmatched by Irish wit. The handful of people who inhabit a certain little island in the Atlantic, off the coast of Donegal, enjoy so much health and so little wealth that there is no doctor on the spot. In rare cases of emergency a physician is brought in a boat from the nearest village on the mainland.

On one occasion some islanders who were obliged to summon the doctor found that he had gone to Dublin on business. As the case was urgent, they invoked the services of another practitioner. This gentleman was a Scotsman, with the proverbial canniness of his race, and he declined to undertake the voyage unless he received his fee, a golden sovereign, in advance.

There was no help for it, and the money was paid. The physician went to the island and attended to the case. But when he inquired for a boat to take him away he found that not a boatman on the island would ferry him back again for any less consideration than £2, paid in advance.

The doctor had to part with the money and to admit that he had been beaten at his own game.

—*Diogenes the Wise.*

With all his faults, the old philosopher of Athens was often called Diogenes the Wise. Whether his wisdom was really so great as to deserve that may be doubted, but his worst faults seem to have been good qualities carried to excess. In opposing too much luxury he cut himself off from the comforts of life; in his eagerness to make life simple he lost sight of its gentilities; he was saying at the expense of neatness, truthful at the cost of courtesy and plain spoken even to rudeness. One would say that he was coarse grained by nature, but he showed signs of tenderness and even refinement, which proved that the grain was not entirely coarse and which makes us wonder at an age that could produce two men so wise and yet so different as Diogenes, the rude, "walking philosopher" of his time, and Plato, the polished and aristocratic gentleman.—St. Nicholas.

**GOT IN HIS WHOLE NAME.**

A Genoese paper tells this delightful story at America's expense: When the Duke of Veragua, the descendant of Christopher Columbus, visited Chicago, he inquired at a telegraph office the charge for a telegram to the city of Columbus of ten words. "Fifteen cents," answered the official, "not including the signature, which is wired free." Whereupon the duke wired:

"Major, Columbus: Shall visit you every next Monday or Tuesday." And he signed it: "Cristobal Colon de Toledo y Larrentegui de la Cerda Ramires de Baguedany Gante Almirante Adelantado Mayor de las Indias, Y

de las Jamaicas, Duque de Veraguas, Grande de Espana, Senor del Reino, Caballero de la Insigne Orden del Toison d'Oro, Gran Cruz de la Concepcion de Villaviciosa, Gentil Hombre de Camarilla del Rey de Espana."

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given to the creditors of said deceased to ex-  
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